Carnaghts PS - Anti – Bullying Policy 2022-23

Compliant with Addressing Bullying in Schools Act (NI) 2016

At Carnaghts Primary School, we believe all forms of bullying behaviour are unacceptable. We believe that all pupils have the right to learn in a safe and supported environment. We aim to provide a working, caring and happy environment in which the potential of every child can be realised. We wish to promote in all our pupils such values as will make them caring, responsible citizens. We believe in the dignity and worth of each individual and in the development of the whole person. All members of staff share these values and work to ensure a pupil-centred approach in which caring is a shared responsibility of all staff. These values underpin and shape all our school policies.

The Legislative Context:

The Addressing Bullying in Schools Act (Northern Ireland) 2016

The Education (School Development Plans) Regulations (Northern Ireland) 2010

The Children (Northern Ireland) Order 1995

The Human Rights Act 1998

The Health and Safety at Work Order (Northern Ireland) 1978

Statutory Guidance for Schools and Boards of Governors (DE, 2019)

Pastoral Care in School: Promoting Positive Behaviour (DE, 2001) Safeguarding and Child Protection in Schools: A Guide for Schools (DE, 2017)

Safeguarding Board for Northern Ireland Policies and Procedures (SBNI, 2017)

United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child (UNCRC)

**The International Context**

[United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child](https://downloads.unicef.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/2010/05/UNCRC_united_nations_convention_on_the_rights_of_the_child.pdf?_ga=2.109765637.1827233515.1552648186-274690600.1552648186) (UNCRC)

The key points to note are:

The Addressing Bullying in Schools Act (Northern Ireland) 2016:

Provides a legal definition of bullying.

Places a duty on the Board of Governors to put in place measures to prevent bullying behaviour, in consultation with pupils and parents.

Requires schools to record all incidents of bullying behaviour and alleged bullying incidents.

Sets out under which circumstances this policy should be applied, namely:

In school, during the school day

While travelling to and from school

When under control of school staff, but away from school (e.g. school trip)

When receiving education organised by school but happening elsewhere (e.g. in another school in the ALC)

Requires that the policy be updated at least every four years.

The Education and Libraries Order (NI) 2003, requires the Board of Governors to:

‘Safeguard and promote the welfare of registered pupils’ (A.17)

The United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child (UNCRC) sets out every child’s right to:

Be protected from all forms of physical or mental violence, injury or abuse, maltreatment

exploitation. (A.19)

Be protected from discrimination. (A.2)

Express their views, in a supported and accessible way, on issues that affect them, and to have

their opinions taken seriously. (A.12)

Education. (A.28)

Aims of our policy:

Everyone has responsibility for creating a safe and supportive learning environment for all members of the school communities. Everyone in the school community, including pupils, their parents/carers and the staff of the school are expected to respect the rights of others to be safe.

Everyone has the responsibility to work together to:

* foster positive self-esteem and behave towards others in a mutually respectful way
* model high standards of personal pro-social behaviour
* be alert to signs of distress and other possible indications of bullying behaviour
* inform the school of any concerns relating to bullying behaviour
* refrain from becoming involved in any kind of bullying behaviour, even at the risk of incurring temporary unpopularity.
* refrain from retaliating against any form of bullying behaviour
* intervene to support any person who is being bullied, unless it is unsafe to do so.
* report any concerns or instances of bullying behaviour witnessed or suspected, to a member of staff.
* emphasise the importance of seeking help from a trusted adult about bullying behaviour when it happens or is observed
* listen sensitively to anyone who has been bullied, take what is said seriously, and provide reassurance that appropriate action will be taken
* know how to seek support – internal and external
* resolve difficulties in restorative ways to prevent recurring bullying behaviour and meet the needs of all parties.

Links with other school policies

This anti-bullying policy forms part of the school's overall Pastoral Care policy. It links with the Child Protection policy in which the school outlines the steps taken to protect children from harm and develop their personal safety strategies. It links with the Positive Discipline policy in which the school outlines the types of behaviour which are considered appropriate and inappropriate, together with the sanctions which will be used as part of the disciplinary process. It also links with the E Safety Policy and the Acceptable Use of Internet and Digital Technologies guidelines.

Agreed definition of bullying behaviour

What is meant by the term ‘bullying’? The Addressing Bullying in Schools Act (NI) 2016 provides schools with a legal definition

**Addressing Bullying in Schools Definition of “bullying”:**

In this Act “bullying” includes (but is not limited to) the repeated use of-

(a) any verbal, written or electronic communication,

(b) any other act, or

(c) any combination of those, by a pupil or a group of pupils against another pupil or group of pupils, with the intention of causing physical or emotional harm to that pupil or group of pupils.

(2) For the purposes of subsection (1), “act” includes omission.

Bullying is behaviour that is usually repeated, which is carried out intentionally to cause hurt, harm or to adversely affect the rights and needs of another or others. **It is important to understand that not all behaviour that is ‘hurtful’ is bullying.** It may be socially unacceptable behaviour and it does need to be addressed in order to stop it from happening but it is not bullying.

When assessing a one-off incident, to make a decision on whether to classify it as bullying, the school shall consider the following criteria:

* severity and significance of the incident
* evidence of pre-meditation
* impact of the incident on individuals (physical/emotional)
* impact of the incidents on wider school community
* previous relationships between those involved
* any previous incidents involving the individuals

Any incidents which are not considered bullying behaviour will be addressed under the Positive Behaviour Policy.

The following unacceptable behaviours, when repeated, targeted and intentionally hurtful, may be considered a bullying behaviour:

* Verbal or written acts
  + saying mean and hurtful things to, or about, others
  + making fun of others
  + calling another pupil mean and hurtful names
  + telling lies or spread false rumours about others
  + try to make other pupils dislike another pupil/s
* Physical acts
  + hitting
  + kicking
  + pushing
  + shoving
  + material harm, such as taking/stealing money or possessions or causing damage to possessions
* Omission (Exclusion)
  + Leaving someone out of a game
  + Refusing to include someone in group work
* Electronic Acts
  + Using online platforms or other electronic communication to carry out many of the written acts noted above
  + Impersonating someone online to cause hurt
  + Sharing images (eg. photographs or videos) online to embarrass someone

This list is not exhaustive and that other behaviours which fit with the definition may be considered bullying behaviour.

There are various motivations behind bullying, including those named in the Act. These include, but are not limited to:

* Age
* Appearance
* Breakdown in peer relationships
* Community background
* Political affiliation
* Gender identity
* Sexual orientation
* Pregnancy
* Marital status
* Race
* Religion
* Disability / SEN
* Ability
* Looked After Child status
* Young Carer status

Bullying is an emotive issue, therefore it is essential that we ensure we use supportive, understanding language when discussion these matters. For that reason, we will not refer to a child as ‘a bully’, nor will we refer to a child as ‘a victim’. Instead, we will refer to the child by describing the situation surrounding that child, for example:

* A child displaying bullying behaviours
* A child experiencing bullying behaviours

We encourage all members of the school community to use this language when discussion bullying incidents.

Definitions of emotional and physical harm are set out in the DE Guidance.

In determining ‘harm’ we define:

* Emotional or psychological harm as intentionally causing distress or anxiety by scaring, humiliating or affecting adversely a pupil’s self-esteem.
* Physical harm as intentionally hurting a pupil by causing injuries such as bruises, broken bones, burns or cuts.

Following discussions at various times, with governors, teachers, pupils, parents and ancillary staff, the definition of bullying behaviour can be summarised as follows:

Bullying is the wilful, conscious desire to hurt, threaten or frighten someone else. It is behaviour and/or threats, usually repeated and carried out intentionally to cause hurt, harm or to adversely affect the rights and needs of children or staff.

While bullying is usually repeated behaviour, there are instances of one-off incidents that we may consider as bullying. When assessing a one-off incident, to make a decision on whether to classify it as bullying, the school shall consider the following criteria:

* severity and significance of the incident
* evidence of pre-meditation
* impact of the incident on individuals (physical/emotional)
* impact of the incidents on wider school community
* previous relationships between those involved
* any previous incidents involving the individuals.

Any incidents which are not considered bullying behaviour will be addressed under the Positive Behaviour Policy.

At times it is easy to recognise as it manifests itself in a violent or aggressive manner with the victim being physically abused. At other times however it is not so easily identified and may have a more emotional or psychological effect on the victim, as in name-calling, put-downs, threats, extortion, manipulation or isolation. Usually bullying is a campaign, over a period of time on an individual child, but sometimes there is just one incident. For bullying to occur there may be an imbalance of strength i.e. two children of equal physical or psychological strength quarrelling may not be a case of bullying.

Bullying however may take the following forms:

Physical - pushing, kicking, hitting or any other use of physical violence

Written/ verbal - name calling, sarcasm, spreading rumours, nasty teasing or hurtful notes, put-downs and threats

Emotional - excluding, being deliberately unfriendly, tormenting, teasing,

threatening or rude gestures

Menacing - demanding money, possessions or food to copy homework or allow to play in a game/sit beside someone etc.

Cyber-bullying - use of internet, social media, games or electronic mobiles devices to threaten, carry out or support any of the above

The school has a positive discipline policy, based on explicit rules, rewards and sanctions.

THE PRINCIPAL CONSIDERS ANY OF THE ABOVE AIMED AT STAFF AS BULLYING OF STAFF AND WILL BE DEALT WITH ACCORDINGLY, INCLUDING INVOLVING GOVERNORS AND THE PSNI.

Preventing bullying:

At Carnaghts Primary School we aim to promote a strong anti-bullying ethos within the school and the wider school community.

There are a number of key actions that will be taken forward, with the aim of preventing bullying and creating a safe learning environment. These include:

* Raising awareness and understanding of the positive behaviour expectations, as set out in the Positive Behaviour Policy, therefore promoting self-discipline among pupils and respect for each other.
* Use of Playground buddies and P7 Monitors.
* Develop class/school contract
* Promotion of anti-bullying messages through the curriculum eg. inclusion of age-appropriate material specific to individual subject areas related to bullying, positive behaviour and inclusion
* Addressing issues such as the various forms of bullying, including the how and why it can happen, through PDMU, sport and group work.
* Involvement in meaningful and supportive shared education projects, supporting pupils to explore, understand and respond to difference and diversity.
* Through the preventative curriculum actively promote positive emotional health and wellbeing
* Participation in the NIABF annual Anti-Bullying Week activities
* Engagement in key national and regional campaigns, eg Safer Internet Day, Good Relations Week, etc.
* Development of peer-led systems (e.g. Monitors) to support the delivery and promotion of key anti-bullying messaging within the school
* Development of effective strategies for playground management, e.g. training for supervisors, zoning of playgrounds, inclusion of specific resources (buddy benches) and provision of a variety of play options to meet the needs of all pupils.
* Focused whole-school assemblies to raise awareness and promote understanding of key issues related to bullying.
* Development of effective strategies for the management of unstructured times (eg. break time, lunch)
* Provision and promotion of extra-curricular activities, aimed at supporting the development of effective peer support relationships and networks. E.g. sporting activity, creative arts, leisure and games.
* School displays, including Carnaghts Cares posters highlighting who children can talk to if unhappy, however ensuring they understand that they can talk to any member of staff they trust.

Under the new legislation, preventative measures will put in place to prevent bullying behaviour on the way to and from school. While many of the measures outlined above will support the development of an anti-bullying culture, there are a number of ways we can further build upon this related specifically on the journey to and from school. This includes:

* Development of a culture where pupils take pride in their school and are viewed as ambassadors for their school within the community. This includes regular reminders of the positive behaviour expectations of pupils whilst travelling to and from school.
* Measures to empower pupils to challenge inappropriate and unacceptable behaviour of their peers during the journey to and from school. This may include the implementation of peer monitoring on the school bus.
* Regular engagement with transport providers (EA Transport) to ensure effective communication and the early identification of any concerns.
* Appropriate deployment of staff to support the transition from school day to journey home (e.g. staff duty at school gate)

At Carnaghts Primary School it is important to raise awareness of the nature and impact of online bullying and support their pupils to make use of the internet in a safe, responsible and respectful way. This may include:

* Addressing key themes of online behaviour and risk through PDMU/Circle time, including understanding how to respond to harm and the consequences of inappropriate use.
* Participation in Anti-Bullying Week activities.
* Engagement with key statutory and voluntary sector agencies (eg. C2k, PSNI, Public Health Agency, Safeguarding Board for NI e-Safety Forum) to support the promotion of key messages.
* Participation in annual Safer Internet Day and promotion of key messages throughout the year.
* Development and implementation of robust and appropriate policies in related areas (eg. Acceptable Use of the Internet Policy, Filtering and Blocking Policy, Mobile Phone Policy, Connected Devices Policy, etc.)

We will endeavour to:

Develop children’s social skills, including through PDMU, sport & group work;

Promote self-discipline among pupils and a respect for each other;

Use Playground Buddies and P7 Monitors;

Encourage good behaviour on the part of pupils;

Ensure comprehensive supervision rota with Principal on supervision duty before school, break, dinner-time and going home time;

Listen to children and deal with incidents as quickly as possible.

Ensure privacy for those pupils who feel embarrassment when changing for PE.

At Carnaghts Primary School everyone has responsibility for creating a safe and supportive learning environment for all members of the school community

Everyone in the school community, including pupils, their parents/carers and the staff of Carnaghts Primary School are expected to respect the rights of others to be safe.

Everyone has the responsibility to work together to:

foster positive self-esteem

behave towards others in a mutually respectful way

model high standards of personal pro-social behaviour

be alert to signs of distress\* and other possible indications of bullying behaviour

inform the school of any concerns relating to bullying behaviour

refrain from becoming involved in any kind of bullying behaviour, even at the risk of incurring temporary unpopularity.

refrain from retaliating to any form of bullying behaviour

intervene to support any person who is being bullied, unless it is unsafe to do so.

report any concerns or instances of bullying behaviour witnessed or suspected, to a member of staff.

emphasise the importance of seeking help from a trusted adult about bullying behaviour when it happens or is observed

explain the implications of allowing the bullying behaviour to continue unchecked, for themselves and/or others.

listen sensitively to anyone who has been bullied, take what is said seriously, and provide reassurance that appropriate action will be taken

know how to seek support – internal and external

resolve difficulties in restorative ways to prevent recurring bullying behaviour and meet the needs of all parties

A variety of methods are used to achieve the above through the taught curriculum and also the use of drama, media and display. The school displays Carnaghts Cares posters, highlighting who children can talk to if they are unhappy.

Actions to be taken:

* Children should be encouraged to speak out if they witness bullying behaviour, or are involved in incidences themselves.
* Incidents of bullying will be recorded in a notebook, investigated and appropriate action taken. Relevant notes may be transferred into a pupil’s own file.
* Initially the class teacher will deal with any incident.
* Repeated episodes or similar incidents will result in the matter being dealt with by the principal in partnership with the parents.
* If the child persists in misbehaviour, the parent will be informed again of the record of bullying that has taken place, the sanctions used and the failure of these to bring a change in the misbehaviour.
* In partnership with the parent, a plan of action will be drawn up as to the next steps to help the child conform to the accepted standard of behaviour for the school. This plan of action may require reviewing and developing.

**Reporting a Bullying Concern**

**Pupils Reporting a Concern**

If a child has a concern about a potential bullying situation, they should discuss this with a member of staff that they trust. At Carnaghts Primary School children will be encouraged to raise concerns with any member of staff, including teaching and non-teaching staff.

**How pupils can raise a bullying concern-**

* Verbally- talking to a member of staff
* By writing a note to a member of staff (eg. in a homework diary/Worry Box)
* By posting a comment in a ‘concern box’

**ANY** pupil can raise a concern about bullying behaviour, not just the pupil who is experiencing this behaviour. Pupils will be encouraged to ‘get help’ if they have a concern about bullying that they experience or is experienced by another.

**Parents/Carers Reporting a Concern**

Parents and carers should raise concerns about alleged bullying behaviour with the school at the earliest opportunity. Parents/carers need to encourage their children to react appropriately to bullying behaviour and to not do anything to retaliate or to ‘hit back’.

The process of parents/carers reporting bullying concern is-

* In the first instance, all bullying concerns should be reported to the Class Teacher
* Where the parent is not satisfied that appropriate action has been taken to prevent further incidents, or where further incidents have taken place, the concern should be reported to the principal.
* Where the parent/carer remains unsatisfied that the concern has not been appropriately responded to, the school’s complaints procedure should be followed. This may involve making a formal, written complaint, to the Chair of the Board of Governors.

All reports of bullying concerns received from pupils and/or parents/carers will be responded to in line with this policy and that feedback will be made to the person who made the report. However, it must be noted that no information about action taken in relation to a pupil can be disclosed to anyone other than the pupil and his/her parents/carers.

**Responding to a Bullying Concern**

The processes outlined below provide a framework for how the school will respond to any bullying concerns identified.

Using the NIABF Effective Responses to Bullying Behaviour resource, the member of staff responsible shall…

* Clarify facts and perceptions
* Check records
* Assess the incident against the criteria for bullying behaviour
* Identify any themes or motivating factors
* Identify the type of bullying behaviour being displayed
* Identify intervention level
* Select and implement appropriate interventions for all pupils involved, including appropriate interventions, consequences and sanctions not listed in the Effective Responses to Bullying Behaviour resource
* Track, monitor and record effectiveness of interventions
* Review outcome of interventions
* Select and implement further intentions as necessary

NIABF advocates a restorative approach to responding to bullying behaviour. Interventions suggested in the Effective Responses to Bullying Behaviour resource focus on responding to the behaviour, resolving the concern and restoring the wellbeing of those involved and we in Carnaghts Primary School would aim to use this approach.

When responding to a bullying concern, school staff shall implement interventions aimed at responding to the behaviour, resolving the concern and restoring the wellbeing of those involved. Where appropriate, school staff may implement sanctions for those displaying bullying behaviour.

**Actions to be taken**

* Everyone has a responsibility to keep everyone else safe. Encourage children to speak to a member of staff if they have any concerns.
* Incidents of bullying will be recorded and appropriate restorative action taken. Any information gathered may be transferred to a pupil own file.
* Initially the class teacher will deal with any incident.
* Repeated episodes or similar incidents will result in the matter being dealt with the principal in partnership with the parents.
* If a child/group of children persists in misbehaviour, the parent will be informed again of the record of bullying that has taken place, the sanctions used and failure of these to bring a change in the misbehaviour.
* In partnership with the parent a plan of action will be drawn up as to the next steps to help the child conform to the acceptable standard of behaviour for the school. This support plan may require reviewing and developing.

**Recording**

The legal requirement, as set out in the Addressing Bullying in Schools Act (NI) 2016, is to maintain a record of all incidents of bullying and alleged bullying behaviour.

At Carnaghts Primary School we will centrally record all relevant information related to reports of bullying concerns, including:

* how the bullying behaviour was displayed (the method)
* the motivation for the behaviour
* how each incident was addressed by the school
* the outcome of the interventions employed.

Records will be kept on the online SIMS Behaviour Management Module, which is part of the C2k system in schools. Access to these records will be restricted and only provided to those members of school staff with a legitimate need to have access.

All records will be maintained in line with relevant data protection legislation and guidance and will be disposed of in line with the school’s Retention and Disposal of Documents Policy. Collated information regarding incidents of bullying and alleged bullying behaviour will be used to inform the future development of anti-bullying policy and practice within the school.

Possible Sanctions:

* Daily report where Principal monitors behaviour
* Withdrawal of playtime at break/ lunch
* Removal of privileges, i.e. extra play time
* Separation from child(ren) being bullied e.g. at extra-curricular activities, trips.

Parents are advised to raise concerns about their child/ children with the principal in relation to suspected or confirmed bullying occurring.

*Any bullying or harassment of the Principal or staff by parents may result in the adult being banned from entering the school premises. All parents/carers are visitors to the school and do not have the right to threaten or harass staff.*

**Professional Development of Staff**

At Carnaghts Primary School we are committed to ensure that staff are provided with appropriate opportunities for professional development. We will ensure that opportunities for safeguarding training are afforded to Governors and all staff – teaching and non-teaching. CPD records will be kept and updated regularly.

**Monitoring and Review of Policy**

It is the responsibility of the Board of Governors, in liaison with the Principal, to monitor the effectiveness of the Anti-Bullying Policy.

To appropriately monitor the effectiveness of the Anti-Bullying Policy, the Board of Governors shall:

maintain a standing item on the agenda of each meeting of the Board where a report on recorded incidents of bullying will be noted

identify trends and priorities for action

assess the effectiveness of strategies aimed at preventing bullying behaviour

assess the effectiveness of strategies aimed at responding to bullying behaviour

It is a legal requirement that the Anti-Bullying Policy be reviewed at intervals of no more than four years. However, the policy will be reviewed following any incident which highlight the need for such a review. It must also be reviewed when directed to by the Department of Education and in light of new guidance.

This Anti-Bullying Policy shall be reviewed as required, in consultation with pupils and their parents/carers, on or before the [date 4 years from now].

If the bullying persists and the above mentioned methods of dealing with such behaviour prove to be ineffective, the Principal may need to explore other avenues for dealing with the pupil and the victim, seeking advice from the Board of Governors and relevant agencies and if need be, referring the matter under the Child Protection procedures stated. (Refer to sanctions under Positive Discipline section).